

In the claims:

Please amend the claims as reflected in the following listing:

1-4. (Cancelled)

5. (New) A method for establishing subscriber connections between a central site and a plurality of subscriber premises in a digital hybrid subscriber network, the method comprising the steps of:

- coupling an RDSLAM by at least one optical fiber to the central site;
- coupling a plurality of subscriber transmission devices to the RDSLAM via a corresponding plurality of subscriber-specific electrically conductive transmission lines;
- coupling each transmission line to a corresponding conversion element in the RDSLAM;
- coupling each conversion element optically to a passive optical element, each conversion element being constructed to
  - produce a subscriber-specific electric signal from downstream signals received from the passive optical element and to feed the subscriber-specific electric signal to the corresponding transmission line;
  - convert a subscriber-specific upstream signal received from the corresponding transmission line to an upstream optical signal and to feed the upstream optical signal to the passive optical element;
  - operate independently of other conversion elements in the RDSLAM; and
  - receive its operating power through the corresponding transmission line,
- coupling the passive optical element to the at least one optical fiber, wherein the passive optical element is constructed to
  - receive the downstream signals from the at least one optical fiber and distribute the downstream signals to the conversion elements; and
  - combine the upstream optical signals received from the conversion elements onto the at least one optical fiber.

6. (New) A method according to claim 5, further comprising the steps of:

- inserting a power-generating element into at least one conversion element; and

constructing each power-generating element to produce operating power for the corresponding conversion element from electric power received through the corresponding transmission line.

7. (New) A method according to claim 5, further comprising a step of feeding electric power from a subscriber transmission device through the corresponding transmission line to the corresponding conversion element.

8. (New) A method according to claim 5, wherein at least one conversion element is constructed to

convert the downstream signals from optical form to electric form; and  
separate the subscriber-specific electric signal from the converted signals.

9. (New) A method according to claim 5, wherein at least one conversion element is constructed to

separate a subscriber-specific signal from the downstream signals; and  
convert the separated signal from optical form to electric form, thereby to obtain the subscriber-specific electric signal.

10. (New) A digital hybrid subscriber network comprising:

- at least one optical fiber coupled to a central site at its first end;
- an RDSLAM coupled to a second end of the at least one optical fiber, the RDSLAM being located at an intermediate site between the central site and a plurality of subscriber transmission devices, the RDSLAM being further provided with a passive optical element coupled with the at least one optical fiber, and with a plurality of subscriber specific conversion elements;
- a plurality of subscriber-specific electrically conductive transmission lines coupled between the plurality of conversion elements and the corresponding plurality of subscriber transmission devices;
- wherein the passive optical element is constructed to  
receive downstream signals from the at least one optical fiber and distribute the downstream signals to the conversion elements; and  
combine upstream optical signals received from the conversion elements onto the at least one optical fiber,

- and wherein at least one conversion element is constructed to
  - produce a subscriber-specific electric signal from the downstream signals received from the passive optical element and to feed the subscriber-specific electric signal to the corresponding transmission line;
  - convert a subscriber-specific upstream signal received from the corresponding transmission line to an upstream optical signal and to feed the upstream optical signal to the passive optical element;
  - operate independently of other conversion elements in the RDSLAM; and
  - receive its operating power through the corresponding transmission line.
- 11. (New) A digital hybrid subscriber network according to claim 10, wherein at least one conversion element comprises a power-generating element for producing operating power for the corresponding conversion element from electric power received from the corresponding transmission line.
- 12. (New) A digital hybrid subscriber network according to claim 10, further comprising power supply constructed to supply the operating power required by each conversion element through the corresponding transmission line.
- 13. (New) A digital hybrid subscriber network according to claim 12, wherein the power supply comprise current feeding means in each subscriber transmission device, the current feeding means being constructed to feed direct electric current onto the corresponding transmission line.
- 14. (New) An RDSLAM equipment for a digital hybrid subscriber network, the RDSLAM equipment comprising:
  - an optical interface for connecting the RDSLAM equipment to at least one optical fiber;
  - an electric interface for connecting the RDSLAM equipment to a plurality of electrically conductive transmission lines;
  - at least one passive optical element coupled to the optical interface for receiving and sending optical signals therethrough;
  - a corresponding plurality of subscriber-specific conversion elements each coupled to a corresponding transmission line and being operable to:

produce a subscriber-specific electric signal from downstream optical signals received from the passive optical element and to feed the subscriber-specific electric signal to the corresponding transmission line;  
convert a subscriber-specific upstream signal received from the corresponding transmission line to an upstream optical signal and to feed the upstream optical signal to the at least one passive optical element;  
operate independently of other conversion elements in the RDSLAM equipment;  
and  
receive its operating power through the corresponding transmission line.

15. (New) An RDSLAM equipment according to claim 14, wherein each subscriber-specific conversion element comprises a power-generating element constructed to receive electric power from the corresponding transmission line and to produce operating power for the corresponding conversion element from the electric power.
16. (New) An RDSLAM equipment according to claim 14, wherein the optical signals are in digital form and the subscriber-specific electric signal is in analog form.
17. (New) A RDSLAM equipment according to claim 14, wherein the optical signals are in analog form and the subscriber-specific electric signal is in analog form.